(iv) The MSP for wheat was fixed at Rs.1000 per quintal for RMS 2008-09. As a result of this and other measures taken by Government, 226.89 lakh tonnes of wheat was purchased in RMS 2008-09, which has enhanced the availability of wheat. The MSP for wheat in RMS 2009-10 was fixed at Rs.1080 per quintal, which has contributed to procurement of 252.92 lakh tonnes of wheat.

Rice

(i) In KMS 2008-09, the MSP of Rs.850/- and Rs.880/- per quintal was fixed for Common and Grade 'A' varieties of paddy. The Government also allowed a bonus of Rs.50/- per quintal on both varieties of paddy during KMS 2008-09 to maximize the procurement. As a result of this, a record quantity of 336.04 lakh tonnes of rice was procured in KMS 2008-09, which has enhanced the availability of rice in the Central Pool. In KMS 2009-10, the MSP of Rs.950/- and Rs.980/- per quintal was fixed for Common and Grade 'A' varieties of paddy. The Government has also allowed a bonus of Rs.50/- per quintal on both varieties of paddy during KMS 2009-10 to maximize rice procurement for Central pool.

(ii) Export of non-basmati rice has been banned *w.e.f.* 1.4.2008. Export of Basmati Rice is allowed only at Minimum Export Price(MEP) of US$ 900 per MT.

(iii) Import of rice at zero duty has been permitted.

(iv) The Central Issue Prices of Rice have not been revised since 1.7.2002.

(v) To have an assessment of major rice purchases by private trade, a notification titled "Rice (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or individuals) Order 2009 has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on 11.11.2009. The order provides that any Company or Firms or individual which purchases paddy (in terms of rice) or rice beyond 10,000 tonnes during Kharif Marketing Season 2009-10 (October-September) shall furnish a return to the Secretary, Department of Food of the State from where maximum quantity has been purchased. In case the purchase of paddy (in terms of rice) exceeds 25, 000 tonnes (throughout the country) the return in the prescribed proforma has to be submitted to Department of Food and Public Distribution of Central Government.

(vi) State Governments were requested to maximize the procurement of rice by opening sufficient number of procurement centres and by other necessary arrangements for the procurement of paddy and its milling. State Governments were also requested to enforce a minimum levy of 50%. Commission to societies and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for KMS 2009-10 has been fixed at 2.5% of MSP to maximize procurement from small and marginal farmers.

Price rise of essential commodities

202. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of essential commodities like pulses, sugar and vegetables have skyrocketed during the past few months in the country;

(b) if so, the details of prices of each of these essential commodities during the last six months as compared to corresponding period of previous year;

(c) whether Government has failed, to gear up the public distribution system to mitigate the impact of deficient rains in the country;

(d) if so, the details and the reasons therefor; and

(e) the remedial measures taken by Government to check the prices of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) There has been increase in All India average wholesale prices of pulses such as Tur, Sugar, Vegetables such as Onion, Potato during the past few months in the country.

(b) The details of the All India average wholesale prices of pulses such as Tur, Sugar, Vegetables such as Onion, Potato during the last six months as compared to corresponding period of previous year is given in the enclosed Statement-I *(See* below).

(c) No Sir. The price control measures through allocations of foodgrains under TPDS to States/UTs and strengthening of the TPDS is given in the enclosed Statement-II *(See* below).

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Government Measures to check the prices of essential commodities are given in the enclosed Statement-III [Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to USQ 176 Part (c)]

Statement-I

All India Average Wholesale Prices of Pulses, Sugar, Onion and Potato during the last six months as compared to previous year

Gram (Rs./Quintal)

Month	2008	2009
June	3141.94	3014.4
July	3163.95	3096.83
August	3292.23	3197.1
September	3297.58	3190.33
October	3246.47	3159.17
November	3192.69	3206.61

Sugar (Rs./Quintal)

Month	2008	2009
June	1608.67	2338.38
July	1630.32	2403.43
August	1807.91	2598,87
September	1916.28	2806.92
October	1892.01	2879.3
November	1872.28	2967.3
		Onion (Rs./Quintal)
June	574.19	947.45
July	659.66	970.36
August	867.31	950.21
September	906.59	961.89
October	889.6	1314.38
November	985.45	1489.95
		Tur (Rs./Quintal)
June	3723.94	5007.5
July	3906.04	5733.9
August	4095.74	6472.7
September	4181.95	6615.6
October	4246.77	6705.2
November	4272.7	6973.9
		Potato (Rs./Quintal)
June	606.66	894.85
July	626.31	1036.5
August	672.36	1158.9
September	701.95	1288.9
October	701.79	1451.4
November	700.91	1551.1

Source:- State Civil Supplies Department

Statement-II

Price control measures through allocations of food grains under TPDS to States/UTs and strengthening of the TPDS.

1. **Allocations of food grains under TPDS:**

Government of India implements TPDS under which food grains at subsidized prices are distributed in all States/UTs as given below:

I) **BPL/AAY allocation norms**

- Allocation of foodgrains under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is made for Below Poverty Line (BPL) families including Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families on the basis of 1993-94 poverty estimates of the Planning Commission projected on the population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1.3.2000 or the number of families actually identified and ration cards issued to them by State Government, *whichever is less.*

- Accordingly, allocations of foodgrains for BPL and AAY categories are made @ 35 kg. per family per month for all accepted 6.52 crore families in the country. The total BPL including AAY allocations made during 2009-10 has been 276.77 lakh tons comprising 181.05 lakh tons of rice and 95.72 lakh tons of wheat.

II) **APL allocation**

- Allocations under APL category are made depending upon the availability of stocks of food grains in Central Pool and past offtake. Due to declining stock position of food grains in the Central Pool, allocations of wheat and rice to States/UTs under APL category were rationalized on the basis of past offtake and availability food grains in the Central Pool. Presently, these allocations range between 10 kg and 35 kg per family per month in different States/UTs.

- During 2009-10, a quantity of 190.20 lakh tons of foodgrains have been allocated to States/UTs under APL category as against 112 lakh tons during 2008-09. This includes the following additional allocations made to augment availability of food grains in the States/UTs with a view to keep prices under control.

(i) A total quantity of 2.65 lakh tons of wheat at MSP based price and 1.70 lakh tons of rice at MSP derived issue price allocated from April 2009 to September 2009 to various States/ UTs as adhoc/ additional/festival allocations.

(ii) **Allocations for drought relief:**

- A total quantity of 7.63 lakh tons comprising 6.18 lakh tons of wheat and 1.45 lakh tons of rice have been issued at MSP based/derived price as drought relief for APL families in 12 drought affected States from September to December 2009.

2. Over and above the TPDS allocations of 190.18 lakh tons mentioned above, the following allocations of foodgrains have also been made during the year.

Allocations for flood relief:

- Additional allocations of 63000 tons of rice and 20000 tons of wheat have been made for flood relief to Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Karnataka and UP during the current year so far.

Additional allocations on requests of State Governments

- Over and above TPDS allocations, 8000 tons of wheat and 4.41 lakh tons of rice have been allocated to the States/UTs at economic cost based on the request received from these State/UT Governments.

3. Besides the above, the Government has released 10 lakh tons of wheat and 5 lakh tons of rice for distribution to retail consumers and 5 lakh tons of wheat for bulk consumers under OMSS during October to December, 2009 to check inflationary trends in food economy.

2. **Measures taken for strengthening of TPDS:**

4. A number of measures have been initiated by Department of Food and Public Distribution to strengthen TPDS which include improved monitoring and vigilance, increased transparency in functioning of TPDS, use of Information and communication technology tools and efficient operation of FPS.

These measures include:

A. Measures to strengthen monitoring and vigilance

(i) Implementation of the Nine Point Action Plan

(ii) Review to detect and eliminate bogus ration cards and action against those with Bogus Ration Cards

(iii Greater involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

B. Increased transparency in functioning of TPDS

(i) Adoption and implementation of revised Model Citizens' Charter to facilitate use of Right to Information Act.

(ii) Introduction of monthly certification of delivery of foodgrains at price shops and their distribution to ration card holders

(iii) Publicity-cum-awareness Campaign on TPDS

(iv) Display of allocation of foodgrains - district and FPS wise on websites for public scrutiny.

C. Use of ICT tools

(i) Pilot Scheme on Computerization of TPDS Operations in four states.

(ii) Pilot Scheme on Smart Card based Operations in Haryana and Chandigarh.

(iii) Piloting of new technologies for tracking movement of vehicles transporting TPDS Commodities.

D. Improve the efficiency of FPS operations

(i) Doorstep delivery of foodgrains to FPS

(ii) Timely availability of fooodgrains at FPS

(iii) Distribution of wheat flour/fortified wheat flour under TPDS

(iv) Allotment of Fair Price Shops to Institutions and Groups

(v) Sale of non-PDS items by FPS

(vi) Revision of Commission paid by State Government to FPS licensees

3. To improve functioning of TPDS, specially during the period of drought, State/UT Governments have been directed to take up a special campaign during October-December, 2009 to verify BPL and AAY ration cardholders to detect and eliminate bogus/ineligible ration cards.

Mandatory hours for Professors in Universities

203. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per UGC, Professors in Universities and Colleges are required to put in at least 40 hours per week;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in a number of Central Universities, Professors, Readers and Lecturers frequently skip classes and they also do not update their knowledge; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to solve this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the work load of the teacher in full employment should not be less than 40 hours a week for 30 working weeks in an academic year. It is necessary for the teacher to be available for at least 5 hours daily in the University/ College.

(c) and (d) No data is available to conclusively indicate that in Central Universities, teachers frequently skip classes or do not update their knowledge. However, a relaxation of two hours in the workload has been given to Professors who are actively involve in research, extension and administration. 57 Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs) have been identified by the UGC to conduct refresher courses and orientation programmes for faculty to update their knowledge.